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Letter dated 22 September 2011 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of the written statement of the delegation of the United Kingdom in exercise of the right of reply to the remarks made by Her Excellency Ms. Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, President of the Argentine Republic, on 21 September 2011 in the General Assembly (see annex).

I should be most grateful if you could arrange to have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 8.

(*Signed*) Mark **Lyall Grant**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 22 September 2011 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Statement of the delegation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in exercise of the right of reply to the remarks made by the President of the Argentine Republic in the general debate on 21 September 2011

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has no doubt about its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands. The United Kingdom Government attaches great importance to the principle and right of self-determination as set out in Article 1, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations and article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. That principle underlies our position on the Falkland Islands. There can be no negotiations on the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands unless and until such time as the Islanders so wish.

The United Kingdom's relationship with all of its overseas territories is a modern one based on partnership, shared values and the right of each territory, including the Falkland Islands, to determine if it wishes to retain a link to the United Kingdom.

The democratically elected representatives of the Falkland Islands once again expressed their own views clearly when they visited the United Nations for this year's debate in the Special Committee of 24. They asked the Committee to recognize that self-determination is a universal human right, and respect for this principle is enshrined in the United Nations Charter as one of the purposes of this Organization. They made clear that they, like any other people, are entitled to exercise the right of self-determination. They reiterated the historical facts that the Falkland Islands had no indigenous people and that no civilian population was removed prior to their people settling on the Islands over 178 years ago. They confirmed that they are and have been the only people of the Falkland Islands, and they did not wish for any change in the status of the Islands. They lamented the measures adopted by the Republic of Argentina that unlawfully aim to limit both their transport links and their access to open and free trade.

The Falkland Islands Government is entitled to develop both fisheries and hydrocarbons industries within its own waters. This right is an integral part of the right of self-determination, which is expressly contained in article 1, paragraph 2, of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It states that all peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources. In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.

The United Kingdom continues to believe that there are many opportunities for cooperation in the South Atlantic. However, in recent years the Republic of Argentina has rejected these opportunities. It withdrew from cooperation on the South Atlantic Fisheries Commission, and in 2007 repudiated the 1995 Joint Declaration on Hydrocarbons. The Republic of Argentina placed a ban on charter flights travelling to the Islands in 2003. It has also introduced domestic legislation

to restrict shipping to the Islands and penalize companies that wish to do business in or with the Falkland Islands.

The United Kingdom has maintained an unchanged defensive military posture in the South Atlantic for over 29 years. This includes routine military exercises. The United Kingdom remains fully committed to defending the rights of the people of the Falkland Islands to determine their own political, social and economic future.